BOOKS and AUTHORS ❀ REVIEWS and COMMENT

NEW AND RECENT FICTION AMERICAN AND FOREIGN

A Danish Novelist's Autobiographical Story—Mr. Thurston's Latest—A Tale by Cosmo Hamilton—Song and Love in Old France.

A DANISH TRILOGY.

PELLE THE CONQUEROR. Boyhood. By Martien Andersen Nexö. Translated from the Danish by Jessie Muir. 12mo, pp. vi, 352. Henry Holt & Co.

When, a generation ago, Guy de Maupassant published his novels, marvels of condensation, in which there was not a superfluous word and in which each word was the only right one, the theory was propounded—in France, of course—that the level of a people's civilization could be gauged by the length of its fiction. The more primitive a nation's life, the theory held, the less varied and complicated its interests, the greater its leisure for reading: there was Russia to prove it, with the voluminous stories of Dostoievsky and Tolstoy. It was an ingenious thesis, it held a certain modicum of truth, but it has since been disproved. The average level of civilization has been raised considerably the world over during the last thirty years, but the novel is showing a steadily increasing tendency to grow longer again. Maupassant, Daudet and a few other contemporary masters were proved to be exceptions—even in their own day. Zola clung to the rule—and it is France that has given us the longest of all modern works of fiction, Romain Rolland's "Jean-Christophe." There are several "trilogies" in course of publication in England today.

It is appropriate that the American publishers of M. Rolland should have undertaken the launching in this country of a translation of Nexo's "Pelle the Conqueror." This translation is an admirable piece of work, for which Miss Muir should be thanked and praised. As for the story itself, that is largely autobiographical, and, in its completed form, presents a panorama of the progress of labor in country and town in Denmark during the last forty years. The first volume, now before us, has been compared by an English reviewer with Sudermann's "Frau Sorge," but, as a matter of fact, it is but one of many pictures of peasant life in northern Europe, chiefly German; for the country of "Dame Care" stretches from East Frisia along the North Sea and the Baltic to the level stretches where Prussia and Russia meet. Eden Phillpotts's peasants are cousins to these cheerless, poverty-stricken strugglers for bare sustenance with a niggardly northern Mother Earth; Zola's peasants are already farther removed from them, though still linked to them by fundamental conditions, and—there is the point of view. What Zola—and Maupassant—revelled in the Germans, with all their modern naturalism, have kept in its true relation to this life as a whole: and Nexo treats its coarseness with a restraint that robs it of all offence.

To those who know the northern peasantries of Europe the chief value of the story of Pelle's Boyhood will, no doubt, lie in its pictures of the daily life of the farm and its hands. We over here, entirely unfamiliar with its conditions, will find our greater interest in its masterly study of the child of the Swedish farm laborer, one of many who annually emigrate to Denmark to find work at better wages. This is no infant prodigy, but a natural boy, not so much self-centred as only half-conscious of what goes on around him, accepting it unquestioningly as the things that are, while receiving unconsciously his first training for the struggle for life in the pasture with the cattle he learns to manage and master, and, in winter, among the boys at the primitive district school. In that training the father, too, has an unconscious part. One of the submerged, broken by toil and years, he instinctively seeks to remain a hero in his boy's eyes by boasting, until the child learns, again not altogether realizing, that he is timid, inefficient, unreliable, and takes him under his own charge instead. The author leaves his young hero in this volume on the eve of his departure for a provincial town to seek his fortune, immediately after his confirmation. For among these primitive Lutherans confirmation means entrance upon independent existence.

The book is studded with pictures of the barren country, the farm, the laborers and maids, their toil and dreary relaxations that remind one of the little Dutch masters of painting in their fidelity to truth. And ever the threatening northern sea of the fishermen is within sight and sound.

A POIGNANT STORY.

RICHARD FURLONG. By E. Temple Thurston. 12mo, pp. 399. D. Appleton & Co.

Mr. Thurston speaks repeatedly in his latest novel of its being a "history." It is a "life story" of a man in his battle for fame and fortune, a "biography of a man and his mind," a "chronicle of circumstances," a "study." At any rate, it has nothing to do with beautiful nonsense, and as, for some reason or other, serious fiction and drama nowadays so largely must, in order to bear the earmarks of earnestness, associate themselves with dark places, so the career of Richard Furlong is far removed from any idyllic scenes such as this author so charmingly portrayed in his recent volume, "The Open Window." In short, Mr. Thurston has returned to realism. And in realism to-day you stare failure and poverty in the face, you have lofty ideals and fond illusions taken from you one by one, penniless you trudge London's streets, you share a doorway at night with a waif of the pavement, you have a pathetic love affair, you make a queer marriage, or what Constance of this story calls "just as good as a marriage," with a child who "drops her aitches," with whom you live under the slates, and at the last with success in your grasp tragedy breaks you. Richard Furlong was an artist, though we cannot believe he was as much of a one as the author thinks; there is nothing at all improbable about his history; indeed, much of it is quite ordinary experience, nor is it told in any particularly impressive way, though the love he found is a poignant story, not without beauty in its conception.

A TROUBADOUR.

MASCAROSE. By Gordon Arthur Smith. Colored frontispiece. 12mo, pp. vii, 257. Charles Scribner's Sons.

Mr. Gordon Arthur Smith is not at all the author of those old favorites of many pleasant people, "The Turquoise Cup" and "The Monk and the Dancer"—issued by the same house. He is quite another gentleman—that one was Arthur Cosslett Smith—and he has written in "Mascarose" a very graceful mediæval tale with a troubadour hero, which calls to mind the pictures of the late Edwin A. Abbey. There is a great castle, lords and ladies in gayest plumage and men-at-arms; there is song and the music of the lute, feasting, a tournament, the playful game of hearts; and there is hate and fear and jealousy; lances are splintered, and there is an idyl of love. Aimar of Blaye, slim and lithe and beardless, with hair the color of wheat in the sun and hands made for the plucking of strings and the penning of verse, on his way to Gavarret sleeps behind a hawthorn hedge, and awakens from his dreams to the vision of the wild rose, the young girl Mascarose, bending over him. Then, as the official song maker of the castle of Gavarret, Aimar denies his love for Mascarose because of the Countess Alazais, but later confesses it, and passes through adventurous fortunes. The Monk of Béziers, an astute man, genial and humorous, a copious eater and drinker, engaged in the "bitter vocation" of writing with his heart's blood his mighty work, a "Breviary of Love," which was to expound all the learning that he had amassed during a studious lifetime, is a character well worth the knowing.

MIXED IMPRESSIONS.

THE DOOR THAT HAS NO KEY. By Cosmo Hamilton. 12mo, pp. 324. The George H. Doran Company.

The title which Mr. Hamilton has selected for his novel has the merit of being strictly true. There is no key to this story, which, as a study of "modern married life," is, moreover, not nearly so significant of the times as the author evidently believes it to be, most of all because its heroine, with all her modernity, is far too vaguely drawn. She does not interest one overmuch; she does not seem, in the last analysis, to have had any well defined aim in life to justify the course she took. She married with the intention of not becoming a wife, planning to be an intellectual and social helpmeet to her well-born husband, but, denying him love, she lost him, and only achieved a worldly position that, brilliant as it was, nevertheless failed to satisfy her British middle-class views. The man himself is not so much a living being as an incarnation of honesty. He escapes being a prig, but at times he is decidedly incomprehensible. Such self-control lies beyond the normal. There is one episode in the book that is capitally done—an account of the trial of a fashionable and fashionably unsavory divorce case, none of the three parties to which, husband, wife and corespondent, can dare to venture into court without committing perjury.

HARROWING.

THE FATE OF FELIX BRAND. By Florence Finch Kelly. Illustrated by Edwin John Prittie. 12mo, pp. 352. Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company.

Felix Brand's countenance wore a harrowed expression. It would have been a strange thing if it had not. He was a rising young architect, and a successful dabbler in the stock market. His friends thought of him as one of Fortune's favorites. Handsome, with a courtly manner and refined, intellectual features, his brown eyes shone with a "winning, caressing look which had been a magnet for the hearts of many women." But his fate, which, if you care to read about him, we should not altogether reveal, illustrates in a very dramatic way the fearful pathological dangers of selfishness. In fine, just another such mysterious Hugh Gordon is liable to get you if you do not mind your moral P's and Q's. We meet Mr. Brand in his luxurious apartment, about to shave. He lays his razor down and his eyes fasten themselves in a devouring stare upon its bright blade. When, presently, he glances at the clock he well starts with surprise. Turning briskly to the mirror to resume the operation of shaving, he finds his face to be freshly shaven, "and in the usual manner, except the upper lip, where had been left the faint, dark stubble of a moustache." He had not even lathered! His razor is before him on the dressing table laden with the results of recent use. This is only the merest beginning. The idea of this story was to some extent foreseen by the author of one of the classic short stories of our literature. However, here it is given a more up-to-date setting.

MILD ROMANCE.

SUSETTE. By Dion Clayton Calthrop. 12mo, pp. 333. The Frederick A. Stokes Company.

Mr. Calthrop, so we are informed, is a protégé of William J. Locke. The statement may be interesting in itself, but it does not affect the fact that as a novelist this young man still has much to learn. He has the assumption of worldly wisdom of the young, but he lacks the inventive faculty in the matter of plot, and imagination as well as experience of life in the conception of characters and the interpretation of the emotions. One would not take this story of his so seriously were it not for Mr. Locke's advertised interest in him. "Susette" lacks originality; it is only mildly romantic, and it is void of literary distinction or even promise. To venture upon a tale of a young man and a girl on an island is justified only when the venturer is sure of his mastery. In the present case it only testifies to the jaunty confidence of youth.

A "PUNCH" IN EVERY LINE

A Subway Guard Delivers Some Horse Sense Philosophy.

WATCH YOUR STEP! By the Subway Guard (Alvin McCaslin). 12mo, pp. 96. L. W. Huebsch.

Horse sense philosophy is a kind with a "punch" in it. "Watch Your Step!" has a punch in every line. There are punches quoted all over the paper jacket of the book. The advertising matter rivals the author. The price of the book is stated with a punch: Pay-as-you-enter; fare, so much. Even the way in which the publisher's name is printed seems to "soak" one a good one. Perhaps there is a good deal more punch in the little book than there is philosophy. However, a subway guard is in an admirable situation for the contemplation of mankind, and this one, turned author, "hands you" the result of his observations straight from the shoulder. He has had, if he is a real one, a good deal of wit, at least in this, that he has not permitted his capacity for the most popular quality in the literature of the day to be lost to the profitable printed page in the roar of the dark subway. He delivers himself upon a great variety of subjects. That "henpecked men don't never give up their seats," that "real mournin' don't make a black noise," "bare armed women want you to look at 'em," "tightwads get theirs," are a few of his themes. He is most philosophical, we think, on the subject of whiskers. "Where's all th' whiskers went?" he inquires. "A good bunch of whiskers makes everybody sit up an' look pleasant nowadays. No fellers with whiskers goes wrong an' keeps 'em. Whiskers is a certificate of character."

MORE PLAYS.

Brentano's announce for publication next spring a new volume of George Bernard Shaw's plays, containing "Fanny's First Play," "Mesalliance" and "The Dark Lady of the Sonnets."

BOOKS FOR THE YOUNG

Cub Reporters and Mighty Hunters—Christmas Tales.

In the absence of war perhaps the most thrilling and romantic life that a youth can lead in the pages of a book is that of a hero of the popular imagination, by every one heard and mysteriously unseen by ordinary mortals, the young newspaper reporter. Two new books for boys "picture" this life, and tell the story, for boys, of the "newspaper game," a game which both authors show to take endurance and strength and wit, nerve and daring, and above all the spirit of winning, in order for one in it to "make good." The heroes of both of these stories are remarkably fine fellows, just such as everybody admires, and after many obstacles and discouragements, and the taking of some desperate chances, it should be heartening to the young to witness how their fine qualities are rewarded. "Donald Kirk, the 'Morning Record' Correspondent" (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.) is for boys of about the age of fourteen. It is the second volume in the "Donald Kirk Series," and shows the hero's life at a preparatory school on the Hudson, where he acts as correspondent of a metropolitan paper. After being ignominiously "scooped," he retrieves himself by some daring ventures to get news. Everything about newspapers has a romantic name, such as "city room," "copy desk," and so on. The lingo of the game is employed in an exhilarating fashion——"The Cub Reporter," by Edward Mott Woolley (Frederick A. Stokes Company), is for readers a little older—Dent Lockwood, the hero, is eighteen—and it takes its audience more into the thick of the fight. The "Morning Sentinel" is a big New York daily, and Dent's training, which leads him to his spurs, takes him through many whirlwind incidents, among them experiences at a strike riot and a theatre fire. The various "types" in the newspaper business, and the scenes of the making of a daily paper, are sketched in a picturesque fashion. And this story, like the other, is calculated to inculcate manly qualities.

(DRAWING by W. HEATH ROBINSON for HANS ANDERSEN'S FAIRY TALES. (HENRY HOLT & CO)

CHRISTMAS CHEER.

"The Children's Book of Christmas Stories," edited by Asa Don Dickinson and Ada M. Skinner (Doubleday, Page & Co.), is a treasury of tales of the season from Dickens and Andersen, Mary Wilkins Freeman, Olive Thorne Miller, Susan Coolidge, Katharine Pyle, Elbridge S. Brooks, John Strange Winter and many others, among them a number of French, German and Russian writers. Here are many ready responses to the plea, "Tell us a story!" The editors have had the forethought to indicate the various ages to whose interest and understanding these tales are best adapted.——Another book of this kind is "Story Book Treasures" (Little, Brown & Co.), which counts among its contributors Shakespeare and William Blake, Ben Jonson and Edward Lear, Peacock and Lewis Carroll, Tennyson and Wordsworth as well as Louisa Alcott and Oliver Wendell Holmes, Helen Hunt Jackson and Bryant, Dr. Hale, Susan Coolidge and Laura E. Richards. The collection has been made by Clara Murray, and there are numerous illustrations.——Five volumes of "Tales for Children from Many Lands" (Dutton & Co.) are attractively printed and illustrated in colors, and moderate in price withal. They are "Æsop's Fables," "English Fairy Tales," "Gulliver's Travels," "Robin Hood" and "Fairy Stories from Spain."

It was decided long ago that the best art is none too good for children. The worthy illustration of their books has, indeed, been now for many years a potent factor in the guidance of their first steps towards a sound appreciation of art. W. Heath Robinson's drawings in colors and black and white for an elaborate new edition of Hans Andersen's "Fairy Stories" are good art while never forgetting their first mission, that of interesting the little ones. This is a beautiful holiday book, worthy of attention. (Henry Holt & Co.).

BEAR HUNTERS.

Speaking of bears, they are most plentiful this season, in books for boys. "The Young Alaskans in the Rockies" (Harper & Bros.) is another story of his three Alaskan boy heroes by an author popular with two generations. Emerson Hough here takes Rob and John and Jesse in pursuit of the grizzly. They camp in the wilderness, snap pictures of wild goats, visit Indian villages, attain to high altitudes, shoot rapids, and learn much of the tremendous landscape, the history and the ways of the Western country. The story is nicely told, and is illustrated with a number of first rate photographs of animals and scenery. —— Another story of the "bear" country is "Ned Brewster's Bear Hunt" (Boston: Little, Brown & Co.), by Chauncey J. Hawkins, author of former "Ned Brewster" books. Ned, accompanied by his father and two guides, hunts Bruin at home with a camera. He stalks other game as well, and the photographs reproduced show his great success. Ned makes a new collection of animals for the camp, and gains in knowledge of woodcraft and animal life. His experiences will strike envy to the heart of the boy reader. —— Parents may be glad to learn that the harmless camera is somewhat supplanting the dangerous gun in modern outdoor stories for the young idea. "Camping on Western Trails" (Harper & Bros.) continues the adventures of the same two boys who were the heroes of "Camping in the Winter Woods." In the new story they spend a summer in the Rocky Mountains, shooting mountain lions and wolves, photographing mountain sheep and bears, and seeking gold in cañon streams. The spirit of self-reliant boyhood is the theme. The instructive photographs which illustrate these Western stories are a big improvement upon the trashy illustrations that were often used in books of this class before the camera motive was introduced.

FOR THE NURSERY.

Mrs. Ella Bentley Arthur's verses in "Sonny Boy's Day at the Zoo" (Century Company) are apt to catch the childish fancy, and as for Mr. Arthur's photographs, they are capital. Indeed, they will give as much pleasure to "sonny boy's" grown-up relations as they will to him. These pictures were taken in the New York Zoological Garden, thereby furnishing to the childish mind the very real delight of a recognizable local habitation in addition to the names of the exotic habitants.

CURRENT TALK OF BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Jules Lemaitre on Ste.-Beuve—An Authorized Life of Edward VII—"The Booke of Kings"—Scientific Jealousy in France.

Sweet are the loyalties of letters, the generous words which are now and then offered by one brilliant writer to another—when that other is pursued by the pack! When the centenary of Sainte-Beuve came around there were a number of commentators who thought the oportunity favorable for rather venomous remarks both on the man and on his work. His criticism, they said, was not infrequently malicious. He could be envious, jealous, and malignant. As for his private morals, the less said about them the better—only these sapient folk immediately proceeded to say all manner of spiteful things about Sainte-Beuve and Madame Hugo. All this, which left a pretty bad taste in the muth, is traversed with delightful good sense by M. Jules Lemaitre, in a brochure which Dorbon-Aine has just published in luxurious form in Paris.

According to this brief study, ironically entitled "Les Péchés de Sainte-Beuve," the great critic was not, after all, so very sinful. He was merely human, and what is more, what may seem to be malicious in his criticism was simply the natural expression of a justifiable opinion. Of course Sainte-Beuve was sometimes irritable. But he had good reason to be. In the second part of his analysis, devoted to the "Livre d'Amour," M. Lemaitre is equally delicate and persuasive in his exposition of Sainte-Beuve's discretion in the whole affair which has since been the subject of so much disparaging talk. He is in particular acquitted of the baseness of bragging about a conquest and giving it a scandalous publicity. Lovers of Sainte-Beuve will welcome this shrewd defence and they will read with special appreciation, by the way, M. Lemaitre's statement that their beloved author is read to-day more than is any other scholar of the Second Empire, more than, for example, either Renan or Taine.

The Memoir of a King.

There are already in existence several books devoted to the late King Edward, but as all of them are displeasing to his son, it is natural that his majesty should contemplate the production of an "authorized" biography, the writer thereof to be chosen by himself. King Edward, unlike his mother, kept no diary or other connected record of his friends and relatives. The Hon. John Fortescue, Royal Librarian at Windsor, is to write the book.

"Untidy Verbiage."

There is justice, sometimes—not always, by any means—in the London "Saturday Review's" tart criticisms on literature and current taste. Witness its condemnation the other day of the "sloppy, untidy verbiage which is now accounted English." It is not difficult to determine what the writer had in mind when he thus continued:

Horace taught us at school not to censure a thing just because it is recent, but we are bound to protest against the increasingly formless work—in prose and poetry alike—which is being produced today and which is called great because it is grotesque, and strong because it is violent. Instinct in language, as in other things, can do much, but it cannot make up entirely for the discipline which comes from taste and knowledge. Not to speak of the amazing twaddle which now gets into print, we saw lately in the admired verse of a modern poet—we take the phrase at random—eyes credited with "ophthalmic eaves."

A Story About Hoarding.

Mr. Ralph Neville, in his new book of good-humored gossip, tells a story of a nineteenth century relative of his who had a queer love for putting bank-notes into books. After his death his executors rummaged out about £30,000 from between the leaves of his library. About another man who also delighted in hoarding money, Mr. Neville relates this anecdote:

A former Lord Dysart who lived more or less an invalid's life in a house on the outskirts of London, carefully watched over by a lady who acted as a sort of companion-nurse, one day asked her to go to town and get a cheque cashed for him at the Bank of England. When she was ready to start the old peer sat down at his writing table, and having written out a cheque for £100,000, told her to be sure and see that she got one note for the whole amount. [When she reached the bank] the cashier communicated with the manager, who asked the nurse to step into his private office. Having satisfied himself as to her authority for making such a request, he said that if she did not object he would much rather send a clerk to accompany her with the note. She gladly assented to this arrangement, and in due course the clerk in person handed the £100,000 bank note to Lord Dysart.

After having done so, he told the peer that there were only three such notes in existence. "One," he said, "we have at the bank, another I have just handed to your lordship, and the third, which some time ago disappeared from circulation, we have never been able to trace."

"Perhaps I can help you," said Lord Dysart, and, hobbling over to a bureau, he unlocked a drawer and took out the missing £100,000 bank note, which had been lying there for many years.

A Royal Numismatist.

The fourth volume of the exhaustive account of Italian coins, the "Corpus Nummorum Italicorum," which the King of Italy is producing, has just been issued. This big quarto of 588 pages of illustrated text deals with the coins of Lombardy, excluding those struck in Milan, which will be described in a fifth volume. Of the previous volumes the first dealt with Savoy, the second with Piedmont and Sardinia, and the third with Liguria and Corsica.

The "Booke of Kings."

Apropos of royalty and literature, it may be noted here that the Grolier Club has just made an important contribution to a collateral subject. This is a study of the "Booke of Kings," published by Henry Holland in London in 1618, a collection of engraved English royal portraits from William the Conqueror to James I. The book has been prepared by Mr. H. C. Levis, whose notes are of solid interest both to the collector of prints and to the historian. The old engravings are beautifully reproduced, being printed, like the text, on Japanese vellum. The Grolier Club has never put its imprint upon a handsomer or more useful volume.

Tolstoy Recollections.

Countess Tolstoy's publication of the letters addressed to her by her famous husband opens the door to other family records. Count Ilya Tolstoy's volume of recollections of his father is now in process of translation into English, and the work in this form will be brought out simultaneously in London and New York.

A Book on El Greco.

A Portuguese addition to the already formidable list of books on El Greco has lately been published at Coimbra. The author, Senhor Ricardo Jorge, denies that Spain had any influence on the painter, asserting that he no more became a Spaniard than Van Dyck became an Englishman. A valuable part of the book is a quotation from the works of the seventeenth century Portuguese writer, Francisco de Mello. It is an interesting and hitherto neglected passage concerning El Greco.

A Queer Jealousy.

The author of a paper on Paris in "The Nineteenth Century" makes a statement which seems to show that much learning is not invariably conducive to largeness of mind. Apropos of the Ethnographical Museum at the Trocadero Palace, he says: "I am credibly informed that two-thirds of the collections accumulated by French ploneer explorers and administrators are hidden away in cellars partly from lack of space in the miserably dark portion of the Palace assigned to this exhibition, partly from a strange jealousy which affects several of the older leaders of French ethnographical science in not wishing to show the treasures under their care to the world at large for fear that some one, especially some foreigner, may forestall them in a monograph or a theory."

JANUARY MAGAZINES LIGHT AND SERIOUS READING

H. G. Wells on the Future of Radioactivity—A New Poem by Stevenson—Robert Herrick on the American Background in Fiction.

In accordance with the policy of its new editor, the January "Century" gives considerable space to fiction. Mr. Wells's "Trap to Catch the Sun" is one of his speculations upon future events, his ingenuity playing this time with the results that control of radio-activity would bring about in human affairs. From a story of a cockney celebrity in the hands of a Mrs. Leo Hunter, by May Sinclair, is culled the neat explanation that "he was not a snob at bottom, only at the top. At bottom he was a very serious artist." Among the serious articles first place should be given to Andrew Carnegie's disquisition on "The Hereditary Transmission of Property," not only the land and possessions of European aristocracies, but also the great business concerns of our own successful men. Richard Barry gives a vivid sketch of the life and personality of that celebrated beau sabreur, "Skobeleff, Russia's War Hero," who died ignominiously in a dive in times of peace. Mr. Barry states openly, however, that his assassination there was the work of the Secret Police, for Skobeleff was at odds with his government and the personal enemy of his Emperor, whom he had publicly called "a coward unfit to reign." As he was the idol of Russia, open action against him would have been dangerous. Hence the disgraceful murder. Thus says Mr. Barry.

The number and variety of interest of the general articles in this issue are so great that mere mention can be made here of William Winter's notable article on "Romeo and Juliet" on the stage; of James Davenport Whelpley's "The German Emperor and the Balkan States," with its warning of commercial possibilities for us insufficiently considered; of Morgan Shuster's "Shall the Filipinos Have a Fourth of July?" and of a ballad, "The River," by John Masefield. "Home," the anonymous novel, is concluded. The department "In Lighter Vein" continues to attract by its excellent make-up and clever illustrations.

SCRIBNER'S MAGAZINE.

In the matter of timeliness, Mrs. Alice Day Maclaren's "The Tragic Ten Days of Madero" takes first place among the contents of this issue of "Scribner's." Mrs. Maclaren and her husband were residents of Mexico City at the time and intimate friends of Madero, whom she describes as "a small, almost timid-looking man, and until one heard him speak one could not believe that he had the courage to attempt such a foolhardy undertaking" as the overthrow of Porfirio Diaz. Apropos of the birthday of Robert Burns a number of rare portraits of the poet are reproduced, J. Cuthbert Hadden pointing out in the accompanying text that, while we have many pictures of Burns, it is most doubtful whether there is a single good likeness of him among them. Mme. Waddington describes her "First years as a Frenchwoman," when, as a young girl but recently married, she went to live with her husband in Paris. She approves of "arranged" marriages because, on the whole, they turn out as well as any others in a society more or less based on the system, and gives some curious information concerning the thoroughness with which the "arrangements" are made, even to the number of lamps allowed to the young couples, and the days on which they can use the carriage while residing with their parents. Henry S. Pritchett talks of "Politicians and the Sense of Humor," and declares that it was Lincoln's possession of this quality that made him the greatest political leader of his day:

Other men there were in the great political drama in which his part lay whose devotion was as great as his. There were those who stated the case of freedom as freely. But the difference is this: All these leaders lost their perspective at one time or another. Lincoln never did. He never took himself too seriously.

There are some hitherto unpublished verses by Robert Louis Stevenson in this number, a "Student Song"; and Austin Dobson emerges from his retirement to contribute some stanzas, "The Poetry of the Future." A writer in the "Point of View," a department that always has something to say that is worth reading, protests against the futile "simplifications" for children of the masterpieces of literature.

YALE REVIEW.

That the literary artist should express himself in his art, and not in writing about it, was the opinion of the younger Dumas, expressed, strangely enough, in the introduction to a series of papers about his own dramas prefixed to their definitive edition. Mr. Herrick, agreeing with the Frenchman, has followed his example, the result being an uncommonly interesting paper on "The Background of the American Novel," in the January number of the "Yale Review," a publication that is winning for itself an enviable place in our serious periodical literature. Certain of Mr. Herrick's views on the place and function of woman in our current life excepted, he is, without room for dissent, one of the most discerning and searching students of our social life, its tendencies and developments. Our background in fiction lacks as yet in a truly national atmosphere, he holds, not because of any fault in our novelists, but on account of the conditions of constant flux which a new continent has imposed upon us. We are the masters of our soil, he maintains, we have not yet become its children; and we are even still less at home in our cities, which are our work places, not our abodes. Nationally, we still stand apart and dominate our American scene, to borrow Henry James's expression, though sectionally, here and there, we may have identified ourselves with it more closely. And even here the brief union is already in course of dissolution. And because we shall continue to dominate our background, because we ourselves shall continue to be more vitally interesting and important than it, Mr. Herrick holds that our fiction, to be truly national, must be of to-day and to-morrow, its background formed of our social evolution. The student of American fiction will find this paper well worth his while; and our novelists will do well to study it.